



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

JUN 29 2001

OFFICE OF
PREVENTION, PESTICIDES AND
TOXIC SUBSTANCES

Mr. Scott Ramminger
President and CEO
American Wood Preservers Institute
2750 Prosperity Avenue
Suite 550
Fairfax, Virginia 22031

Dear Mr. Ramminger:

As you know, the Office of Pesticide Programs is currently preparing a risk assessment for chromated copper arsenate (CCA) and CCA-treated wood. Arsenic is known to be a human carcinogen (9th Report on Carcinogens, Revised January 2001, Environmental Health Information Service, NTP, PHS, HHS). Completion of this assessment has been given high priority within the Agency. We have recently received additional exposure data (soil samples and hand/wipe samples from treated wood) and these data are currently under review here at the Agency. In addition, we have been advised that additional data related to children's exposure in playgrounds where equipment is made from CCA-treated wood will be provided to us by July 31, 2001. Please provide these new data and any other available data that you believe may assist us in estimating risks posed by CCA-treated wood as soon as possible, but no later than July 31, 2001, so that we may give them adequate review and consideration.

We have completed our review of the voluntary proposal to enhance the safer handling information program for CCA-treated lumber submitted by the American Wood Preservers Institute on May 23, 2001. Throughout our review of the proposal, we carefully considered the concerns voiced and the information provided to us in the stakeholder meetings of May 9, 2001 and the public meeting of June 7. We believe several aspects of the proposal constitute positive steps towards improving consumer awareness in the purchase and handling of treated wood. These aspects include the end-tag labeling, in-store bin stickers and signs, and establishment of a toll-free line and web site. In an effort to move forward rapidly on implementation of these critical pieces of the proposal, we are offering several suggestions, summarized below, that we believe are needed in order to ensure clarity and to address key stakeholder concerns. Depending on the results of the risk assessment mentioned above, the Agency may find it necessary to request or require other actions, including regulatory actions.

End-Tag Labeling:

See attachments 1 and 2 for our suggested printing of the five basic messages (attachment 1), and condensed (end-tag fold-out) version of the consumer safety information sheet (attachment 2). Labels should be clearly legible to a person with normal vision and be printed on a clearly contrasting background of vibrant color (other than blue or green).

In-Store Lumber Bin Stickers and Signs:

Bin stickers and signs should include the same five basic messages as specified above for end-tag labeling (attachment 1). Again, stickers and signs should be printed on a clearly contrasting background of vibrant color (other than blue or green).

Consumer Information Sheet - Renaming and Redesign:

Rather than renaming the sheet, "Safe Handling Information Sheet," as in the proposal, we suggest "Consumer Safety Information Sheet." Also, as an interim step during the redesign process, we suggest several changes in the sheet as it currently exists (see attachment 3).

Toll-Free Number:

The information provided should include our suggested revisions (attachment 3) to the Consumer Safety Information Sheet. Also, the call menu should include an option to obtain the telephone number for the National Pesticide Telecommunications Network (NPTN) to obtain additional information or to report problems.

Web Site:

We suggest that the web site be more interactive, perhaps with FAQs and graphics, videos or menus to guide the user through precautionary information. Also, the web site should provide the NPTN telephone number for additional assistance or to report problems and should be linked to EPA's web site for more information on CCA.

It is our understanding that, in terms of timing, you will be able to put in place the toll-free line and web page during July 2001, the in-store signs and bin-stickers during August 2001, and begin shipment of wood bearing new end-tag labeling by September (with significant implementation by October 1). While we recognize that there may be logistical challenges to earlier implementation of the new end-tag labeling, we had anticipated a start date for new end-tag labeling during the month of July and encourage you to proceed as quickly as possible. We will be working with our EPA Regional and State partners to monitor success in all of these areas.

The remaining pieces of the proposal, i.e., public relations campaign, redesign of the current "consumer safety information sheet," and retailer buy-in, need to be more fully explained and, in particular, need to include a discussion as to how the programs will be monitored to determine effectiveness. Thus, we would like to receive, within 30 days from the date of this letter, a proposal that provides more detail in these areas.

We look forward to working with you to ensure the success of these efforts.

Sincerely,

for Anne E. Lindsay
Marcia E. Mulkey, Director
Office of Pesticide Programs

Attachments

ATTACHMENT 1

end-tag labels:

Caution: Arsenic is in the pesticide applied to this wood.

Never burn treated wood.

Wear dust mask and goggles when cutting or sanding wood.

Wear gloves when working with wood.

Ask for the consumer safety information sheet or call 1-800-xxx-xxxx

ATTACHMENT 2

Condensed Version of Consumer Safety Information Sheet - for Fold-Out End-Tag Labeling On Wood

Consumer Information

This wood has been preserved by pressure treatment with an EPA registered pesticide containing inorganic arsenic. Some chemical may migrate from treated wood into surrounding soil over time and may also be dislodged from the wood surface upon contact with skin.

Exposure to inorganic arsenic may present certain hazards. Take the following precautions when handling, determining where to use, using or disposing of the treated wood.

Use Site Precautions

All sawdust and construction debris should be cleaned up and disposed of properly.

Do not use treated wood for mulch, cutting boards, counter tops, beehives, animal bedding or structures or containers for storing animal feed or human food. Also do not use where treated wood may come into direct or indirect contact with drinking water, except for uses involving incidental contact such as docks and bridges.

Safety Handling Information

Dispose of treated wood by ordinary trash collection. Do not burn treated wood in open fires or in stoves, fireplaces, or residential boilers because toxic chemicals may be produced as part of the smoke and ashes. Treated wood from commercial or industrial use may be burned only in commercial or industrial incinerators or boilers in accordance with state and federal regulations.

Avoid frequent or prolonged inhalation of sawdust from treated wood. Sawing, sanding, and machining of treated wood should be performed outdoors while wearing a dust mask and goggles.

Wear gloves when working with wood. After working with treated wood, and before eating, drinking, toileting, and use of tobacco products, wash exposed areas thoroughly.

Because preservative or sawdust may accumulate on clothes, launder before reuse. Wash work clothes separately from other household clothing.

ATTACHMENT 3

Consumer Safety Information Sheet

**For additional information, call toll-free at 1-800-xxx-xxxx
or see our web site at www.xxxxxxx.com**

INORGANIC ARSENICAL PRESSURE-TREATED WOOD (including CCA, ACA, and ACZA)

CONSUMER INFORMATION

This wood has been preserved by pressure-treatment with an EPA-registered pesticide containing inorganic arsenic to protect it from insect attack and decay. Wood treated with inorganic arsenic should be used only where such protection is important.

Inorganic arsenic penetrates deeply into and remains in the pressure-treated wood for a long time. However, some chemical may migrate from treated wood into surrounding soil over time and may also be dislodged from the wood surface upon contact with skin. Exposure to inorganic arsenic may present certain hazards. Therefore, the following precautions should be taken both when handling the treated wood and in determining where to use or dispose of the treated wood.

USE SITE PRECAUTIONS

All sawdust and construction debris should be cleaned up and disposed of after construction.

Do not use treated wood under circumstances where the preservative may become a component of food or animal feed. Examples of such sites would be use of mulch from recycled arsenic-treated wood, cutting boards, counter tops, animal bedding, and structures or containers for storing animal feed or human food.

Only treated wood that is visibly clean and free of surface residue should be used for patios, decks and walkways.

Do not use treated wood for construction of those portions of beehives which may come into contact with honey.

Treated wood should not be used where it may come into direct or indirect contact with drinking water, except for uses involving incidental contact such as docks and bridges.

HANDLING PRECAUTIONS

Dispose of treated wood by ordinary trash collection. Treated wood should not be burned in open fires or in stoves, fireplaces, or residential boilers because toxic chemicals may be produced as part of the smoke and ashes. Treated wood from commercial or industrial use (e.g., construction sites) may be burned only in commercial or industrial incinerators or boilers in accordance with state and Federal regulations.

Avoid frequent or prolonged inhalation of sawdust from treated wood. When sawing, sanding, and machining treated wood, wear a dust mask. Whenever possible, these operations should be performed outdoors to avoid indoor accumulations or airborne sawdust from treated wood.

When power-sawing and machining, wear goggles to protect eyes from flying particles.

Wear gloves when working with the wood. After working with the wood, and before eating, drinking, toileting, and use of tobacco products, wash exposed areas thoroughly. -

Because preservatives or sawdust may accumulate on clothes, they should be laundered before reuse. Wash work clothes separately from other household clothing.